

**To:** Beauvais, Joel[Beauvais.Joel@epa.gov]; Burke, Thomas[Burke.Thomas@epa.gov]  
**From:** Enck, Judith  
**Sent:** Thur 2/4/2016 2:51:32 PM  
**Subject:** Fwd: News Clips (Hoosick Falls)

Joel and tom. See hoosick falls articles but also see the last one about a community in nj that benefitted from the EPA Ucmr3 rule. Judith

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**News 10 ABC: Assemblyman criticizes Hoosick Falls' communication over water crisis**

By Lindsay Nielsen

February 3, 2016, 7:29 pm

HOOSICK FALLS, N.Y. (NEWS10) – State officials are looking into communication issues that have risen as more information about the Hoosick Falls water crisis comes to light.

Assemblyman Steve McLaughlin is calling for action after the water in the village of Hoosick Falls was found to be contaminated with the chemical PFOA.

"If you knew something a year and a half ago and you continued to let those people drink tainted water, that is a huge problem for me as a representative of that area, and I'm outraged," he said.

Documents reveal the village was working on the water issue in April 2014, but village residents weren't told to stop using the water until November 2015. McLaughlin said he plans to ask for legislative hearings on the water contamination as well as subpoena records to the state health department's response to the issue.

"I agree when you hear people say, 'You got to look forward,'" he said. "Yeah, because they don't want to look backwards because there's a disaster when they look backwards."

McLaughlin believes that although a timeline of events on the village website states the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the village, and county and health departments were working to solve the PFOA contamination problem, people weren't told to stop drinking the water until more than a year after test results confirmed contamination.

"There's going to be a lot of knowledge that was missed, and a lot of breakdowns in communication," he said.

Three letters attached to people's water bills were sent to those using the village water system explaining some of the investigation, but McLaughlin said that wasn't enough.

"When you put something on a town website, how many people are going to the town website to get their news," he said. "I think this is one of those scenarios where if you're going to raise the alarm, you really raise the alarm. You hold a town meeting, you put a mailer out, you do robo calls. In today's day in age, Facebook and Twitter are more effective than a water bill."

The EPA said it would be inappropriate to comment on the possible legislative hearings.

The EPA sent the following e-mail to NEWS10 ABC regarding a timeline of the agency's involvement with the village of Hoosick Falls:

*"In December 2014, the Village of Hoosick Falls informed municipal water supply users of sampling results in a letter included with water bills and posted information on the Village website. Saint-Gobain also sent a letter to EPA's Toxic Substance Control Act (TSCA) Confidential Business Information Center informing EPA that reported levels in two of the wells were below the EPA's provisional health advisory level of 400 parts per trillion and the company's report indicated that the third well, which did have PFOA levels above EPA's advisory level, had been taken out of service. This Information Center keeps records submitted by private companies under an information reporting section of TSCA.*

*During 2015, the village continued to take samples, to work with county and state officials, and communicate with water system customers. See the village's timeline at <http://www.villageofhoosickfalls.com/Water/timeline.html>. In October 2015, the Rensselaer County Executive contacted EPA about the problem. As a result, the EPA asked the state health department for more information and was given the latest sampling results from the public supply wells, which showed levels of PFOA above EPA's 400 parts per trillion advisory level.*

*EPA then reached out to the Mayor of the Village of Hoosick Falls in November 2015, outlining steps that should be taken to reduce exposure to PFOA and recommended that alternate water be provided to users of the municipal water supply and that municipal water not be used for drinking or cooking. The EPA remains actively involved, evaluating the site for the EPA Superfund list and also working with the state to determine the extent of the contamination and appropriate steps that might be needed to address it."*

*Mary Mears*

*Deputy Director Public Affairs and Chief Public Outreach Branch*

*U.S. EPA Region 2 (NJ, NY, PR, the US VI and eight Indian Nations)*

WNYT

**Effects of poisoned water are personal in Hoosick Falls**

02/03/2016 10:35 PM

HOOSICK FALLS - Brian Bushner's recycling bins are overflowing. He doesn't dare drink the water; he doesn't even like to wash dishes in it.

It's the new way of life in this small village, after unusually high levels of a cancer causing chemical called PFOA were discovered in the municipal water. Bushner fears all the precautions are too little too late for his hometown and people like his mom.

"She had a double mastectomy January 6th," Bushner tells us. "It was the second time she's had breast cancer."

On Wednesday evening Brian had just gotten back from Bennington, where his mom's doctor told her she needs to start chemotherapy. He says he wishes he could do something to change the circumstances in the Rensselaer County village. He's planning to run for a position on the village board so he can push for a brand new water source - not a filtration system, but a new system altogether.

"You can't trust the filter and people don't trust the people in charge right now," Bushner explained.

NewsChannel 13's Jessica Layton spoke with Mayor Dave Borge over the phone. The mayor says the village's goal is to get the cleanest water quickly, and at as little cost as possible to residents. A temporary filtration system is being installed now and should be ready in the next few weeks. The mayor promises the water will be tested extensively by state agencies.

Brian says that's not good enough. "Even when they say it's safe to drink, I don't trust that."

Bushner admits he shares the concerns of many, that Hoosick Falls could become a ghost town. Especially if they don't get a new water source.

Many people living in Hoosick Falls still have a lot of questions. Representatives from the Department of Health are now making themselves available at the Armory every Tuesday and Thursday from 2:00pm - 8:00pm and Saturdays 10:00am - 2:00pm. If you want to call instead, there's a new hotline number: (800) 801-8092.

The mayor says the permanent filtration system should be ready by October. The EPA and DEC would decide if the village needs a new system, like Brian wants.

### **Banks will lend when Hoosick Falls water safe to drink**

Water supply contains elevated levels of perfluorooctanoic acid; filter will be installed

By Edward Damon

[berkshireeagle.com](http://berkshireeagle.com)

Posted: 02/03/2016

HOOSICK FALLS, NY >> Two local lenders say they could resume issuing new mortgages on village homes when the public water supply is deemed safe to drink.

The Bank of Bennington and Trustco Bank were two lenders reported to have stopped giving mortgages to home buyers in the village, where federal officials have told residents not to drink or cook with the water. But both banks are clarifying their position in light of recent news reports.

Trustco Bank Treasurer Kevin Timmons confirmed the institution is currently not writing new mortgages for any home on the village's public water supply.

Timmons said lenders normally require homes have access to potable water before they finance a home. Under normal circumstances, a test for potability requires checking for e coli and other contaminants, he said.

But Hoosick Falls' water supply contains elevated levels of perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA). The man-made chemical was once used in manufacturing nonstick coating and has been linked to cancers, but regulators don't usually require municipalities test for it. Citing elevated levels and emerging science on the chemical, the EPA says residents shouldn't drink or cook with the water and should limit exposure while bathing.

"It's the first time we've encountered something like this," Timmons said. "When you have water for an entire town with a specific contaminant, you have to add that to the test."

Timmons said, based on a recent conversation he had with Mayor David Borge, he believes a new, "temporary" filtration system meant to remove most of the PFOA from the public water supply will be online by the end of February. He said as far as he knows, the bank would resume issuing mortgages once the filtration system is online and the municipal water supply is deemed safe for cooking and drinking.

A "permanent" system at the water treatment plant is expected to be completed in October. Both systems are being funded by Saint-Gobain, the current owner of the McCaffrey Street site where PFOA is believed to have been released into the groundwater.

A news item on the Bank of Bennington website states the bank wanted to clarify news reports saying the institution is not doing mortgages in the Hoosick Falls area.

"We are still considering mortgages but will require that the water source be safe for drinking," the clarification states. "Unfortunately that means any properties on the municipal water system will not qualify until the filtration systems are in and tested. The bank stands ready to help the community and residents in any way we can."

"We're hoping we can get back to lending in the area soon," Timmons said. "Lending is our prime business and we're anxious to make loans."

WNYT

## **Saint-Gobain CEO says company is a good neighbor in Hoosick Falls**

Dan Bazile

02/03/2016 6:06 PM

HOOSICK FALLS -- After a quick tour of the Saint-Gobain McCaffrey Street site in Hoosick Falls, president and CEO Tom Kinisky explained why a 350 year-old company has been a good neighbor.

"You don't get to be 350 years old without some strong core values. And one of those is just whenever we're in a community, we're part of the community," Kinisky said.

Saint-Gobain is based out of Paris. It's a \$50 billion corporation with about 200,000 employees worldwide. They came to Hoosick Falls in 1999 after acquiring another company operating at that same plant. The company is in the spotlight after PFOA, a cancer causing chemical, was discovered in the village's water. High levels of the chemical were also found near the company's plant.

"We were surprised when we learned about the PFOA in the water. That's for sure," Kinisky said.

The source of the PFOA is still under investigation. Kinisky said they don't know where it's coming from. Saint-Gobain has been helping the community with bottled water. They're also providing a filtration system for the water plant. But the CEO said that doesn't mean they caused the problem. Saint-Gobain used PFOA in PTFE or Teflon to make a number of products.

"If we look at the way we at Saint GOBAIN take our raw materials and use our raw materials here, our products here, we had no idea that it would be getting into the well system," Kinisky said.

He said they also stopped using PFOA in their materials since 2003. However, they don't know about prior owners and other plants in town that used PFOA in the past. He said the priority right now is clean water for residents.

"When all of the cameras are off and all the TV lights are down and all the microphones go away, we will be here," he said.

## **Montclair's water supply shows traces of contaminant**

FEBRUARY 4, 2016, 12:31 AM

BY LISA MARIE SEGARRA

THE MONTCLAIR TIMES

Montclair's wells show traces of a chemical substance, but officials urge residents to remain calm.

The municipal government has reported that elevated levels of Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), were detected in Montclair's drinking water supply during its annual quality tests.

According to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, PFOA is a widely used industrial chemical found in items such as nonstick cookware.

The NJ DEP has set a guidance level of 40 parts per trillion, or its recommendation for a maximum amount of PFOA.

According to a municipal release, the three municipal wells were sampled twice in 2015, with five out of six readings showing results above 40 ppt, ranging from 35 to 48. The readings were conducted as part of the township's annual drinking water quality testing.

"Forty parts per trillion is a very conservative guidance level, which is much stricter than the [federal Environmental Protection Agency] sets. We're just trying to be very protective of public health," NJ DEP Press Officer Lawrence Hajna told The Montclair Times.

According to Hajna, the DEP is working toward establishing a maximum contamination level to its guidelines for drinking water quality.

While there are no standard regulations for PFOA levels, it must be sampled for according to Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule 3 set by the Environmental Protection Agency.

The township release stated that the guidance level serves as "the first phase of an ongoing process to establish a drinking water standard for PFOA."

According to the township, no signs of PFOA were found in tests done on the North Jersey District Water Supply Commission, which provides 80 percent of Montclair's water supply.

According to Montclair Water Bureau Director Gary Obszarny, who is quoted in the release, "with levels so close to the guidance level, the NJ DEP did not recommend shutting off any wells.

"Right now, because of low demand, all three wells are offline which means customers are receiving water only from the NJDWSC," stated Obszarny.

According to MSU Associate Professor of Earth and Environmental Studies Yang Deng, residents should be able to use carbon-based filters to remove some PFOA from drinking water.

However, Hajna noted that is not necessary at this time.

"I don't know if we would even recommend that people [filter their water]," he said. "I don't know at what levels the local water would have to be for that, but we have not publically made that recommendation."

Deng said he was not certain of any health risks from short-term exposure to PFOA. However, with long-term exposure, he said potential health concerns include "cancer or reproductive health risks."

However, in relation to the situation in Montclair, Deng said he could not say at what levels PFOA would pose a risk to public health because it is not regulated by the EPA.

Hajna noted that the NJ DEP reviewed the township's release and said it was a "fair and accurate evaluation of the situation."

In response to the contamination, the municipal Water Bureau has sent out for sampling materials for additional testing of its wells in compliance with DEP recommendations. According to the release, the samples will be analyzed by an EPA-certified laboratory.

"Additional sampling from various locations in the distribution system will provide the Township with a better idea of the extent of unregulated contaminant levels so that appropriate measures can be put into place if necessary," stated Obszarny.

The release stated that the Water Bureau is arranging for a professional services agreement for a comprehensive modeling of the water system to better understand and manage these issues.

"[PFOA] is still under investigation in drinking water. It's still under investigation. There's not a definite source because these types of chemicals are widely used in many consumer products. Many things contain these chemicals and some of it could be from the atmosphere," Deng said.

According to the EPA, PFOA is a perfluorinated chemical, or PFC.

"PFCs are used in a wide variety of industrial and commercial products such as textiles and leather products, metal plating, the photographic industry, photolithography, semi-conductors, paper and packaging, coating additives, cleaning products and pesticides," the EPA stated in a report published in May 2014, "Emerging Contaminants – Perfluorooctane Sulfonate (PFOS) and Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA)."

STAFF PHOTO BY ADAM ANIK

The municipal Water Bureau's pumping station on Watchung Avenue is one of the three locations in Montclair that is tested annually. Last year's tests showed traces of Perfluorooctanoic acid.

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